

Chapter 4

Analysis of Data

4.1 Results

The students were able to incorporate the new vocabulary into their speech quite easily. As previously mentioned, the vocabulary selected was familiar and pictures were used to make identification of the vocabulary items easier for the students. Another factor, which helped the students remember the vocabulary is that some of the words are pronounced similar to their mother tongue, which is Bahasa Malaysia. These words include peas, tomato, strawberry, police, uniform and hospital (Appendix 3).

Since the students were not used to speaking in English, they frequently resorted to codeswitching to their mother tongue.

S	Hah? Cannot answer lah . Jawab yes no ajelah .
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S	Taxi driver lah . I be customer. So I take one card. Hah... Kita kat railway station
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S Okay, now we at the hospital. Drive on Park Road **sampai** Fig Street.

The researcher refrained from making too many corrections during the lessons as it was not the aim of this study to do so.

Upon close examination of the transcripts, the students appeared to know the words to use in order to communicate their ideas. The main problem they faced was in the construction of these sentences.

S The man is look like Chinese. Black hair and mus...**mustash** (mustache). He look very nice and smart, like Hong Kong **artis**. Tu je.

S Hah...this thief is **Mat Salleh**...eh...woman. She got **coklat** eye, black hair and she smiling. She not wear make-up. Very pretty.

Again, the researcher did not correct these mistakes, instead, concentrated on the usage of the new vocabulary introduced.

Another interesting thing observed by the researcher was that, the students seemed to understand most her instructions even though they were given in English.

Saturday, 18th December 1999

The students were already familiar with some of the words in the first vocabulary activity. Words, like tomato, coffee and tea were commonly used by the students and they were items the students encountered everyday. The students had difficulty with items they seldom saw, like cheese, and also words that they did not hear or use regularly

During the activity, the researcher had to help the students construct sentences for the definitions of the words. When asked if they knew the meaning of the word, the students said they did. They said they just did not know how to describe it. However, after several tries, the students got the hang of it and managed to give simple and good definitions for the words without any help from the researcher.

During the speaking activity, the main problem faced by the students was pronunciation. They pronounced some words using the Bahasa Malaysia pronunciation, for example 'tea' was pronounced as 'teh'. In this activity the students managed to recall most of the words exposed to them in the vocabulary activity.

Wednesday, 22nd December 1999

In the introduction, the students were asked to give words to describe their friends' physical appearance. The students managed to give common adjectives such as tall, short, fat, long, etc. They did not know words that can help describe physical appearance in detail. When the researcher pointed to a student's glasses, the others students gave the answer in Bahasa Malaysia.

To avoid giving straight answers to the students, the researcher drew pictures, such as a moustache, beard, curly hair, a bald head, etc. on the board and asked the students to identify them. Some could identify

moustache and beard, but as for the rest of the pictures, the students were in the dark.

During the vocabulary activity, the students had to find matches to various descriptions of people. They were encouraged to read the descriptions out loud in order to familiarize themselves with the pronunciation of these words. On average out of the fourteen descriptions, each group managed to get ten of them correct.

In the speaking activity, the students had to identify the thief who had stolen a friend's bag. The victim gave descriptions and the rest of the class had to select a picture, which corresponded to the descriptions. Again pronunciation was the main problem and for words, which they could not recall, the students found another word, which conveyed a similar meaning, such as 'chocolate' for brown and 'Maggie Mee hair' for 'curly hair'.

Wednesday, 29th December 1999

In the introduction of the third vocabulary activity, the students could only describe an item of clothing by its color. They could not describe the pattern or the material. Most of the students did not know the word for even the common items of clothing, such as pants, shirt, and glasses.

While carrying out the vocabulary activity, the students had to refer to the researcher many times to identify items unfamiliar to them or to translate the word from Bahasa Malaysia. They did not have any problems with colors except the color brown, which was often referred to as 'chocolate'.

The students did not face many obstacles in the speaking activity. They were able to recall patterns and colors but the students had difficulty remembering the items of clothing.

Wednesday, 5th January 2000

Students were well-acquainted with common jobs, like police, doctor, and teacher. They were able to give many words related to such occupations.

Following the introduction exercise, the vocabulary activity proved to be quite easy for the students. The only problem was the students could not make out their team member's drawings.

The students carried out the speaking activity quite well. One obvious problem they encountered was in constructing the questions to ask their friends. As a result, they stuck to one form of questioning, that is, 'Do you...'. This form of questioning limited the number of clues that could help them identify the occupation.

Wednesday, 12th January 2000

The vocabulary in this activity was quite straightforward. During the vocabulary activity, many

students, surprisingly, had problems distinguishing right from left. When asked by the researcher, they said they knew right from left but they panicked because they wanted to listen and follow the directions correctly.

The speaking activity did not take long as there were only four students present that day. This activity was simple and the students had no major problems with it. They were able to use the vocabulary introduced earlier to give directions.

While carrying out the vocabulary activities, it was observed that many of the new words introduced were not new to the students. These words include milk, cheese, tomatoes, banana, strawberry, coffee, tea, tall, short, old, beautiful, face, T-shirt, skirt, shoes, boots, uniform, station, office, computer, left, right, straight. The students were already familiar with these words. In most cases, they just required further practice on the correct pronunciation of these words. More often than not, they used the Bahasa Malaysia way of pronouncing certain words (Appendix 3):

S	Faizal, I want to buy...aaa...cheese, egg, the (tea), tomato, bread.
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S	Kau jadi drebar (driver)...aku jadi penumpang...Eh! Teacher.
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The overall performance of the students in the speaking activities was remarkable. Surprisingly, they were able to use the new vocabulary introduced accurately with only minor mistakes in pronunciation. The students could identify many items but they did not know the word for it in English.

S	Eh? Oooh... you work in a bangunan ?
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S	Oh! You want to go to the masjid .
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Out of the twenty new words introduced in the first vocabulary activity (Appendix 1), the students were able to accurately use fifteen of them in the speaking activity (Appendix 3). The remaining five words were used with mistakes in pronunciation or the students just failed to recall them.

The second vocabulary activity contained many new words, most of them unfamiliar to the students. However they managed to use some of these words in describing different people in the speaking activity.

S	The thief is woman, long...mmmm.... belond (blond) hair like Maggie Mee. A lot of make-up. Mmmmm....ah...I think she look like Madonna, heh, heh.
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One word that they didn't seem to remember was 'brown'. They tended to replace it with the word 'chocolate' to indicate the color.

S	Hah...this thief is Mat Salleh...eh...woman. She got coklat eye, black hair and she smiling. She not wear make-up. Very pretty.
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It may be due to interference from their mother tongue, Bahasa Malaysia, where the color brown is identified by the word 'coklat' or chocolate.

In the fourth speaking activity the students were able to formulate their own questions based on examples given by the researcher.

S	You sell food or not?
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S	Are you work in factory?
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Although the sentence structures were sometimes incorrect, they were good enough to communicate their ideas. In this activity the students remembered some of the new vocabulary introduced but had trouble with the pronunciation, as with the previous activities.

Finally the fifth speaking activity, the students seemed more comfortable in using English as a means of communicating their ideas. Again their sentence structures were haphazard and unorganized, but they managed to relay their messages to their friends.

S	Okay, now we at the hospital. Drive on Park Road sampai Fig Street.
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S	Ahh...until Fig Street...mmm... then belok...eh...turn right kat New Road. You goooo straight until the river. The house is on left.
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The researcher did not think it was necessary to correct their mistakes as long as they understood each other.

The researcher saw considerable improvement in the students' speaking ability. What surprised the researcher the most was the students' effort to use English as a means of communicating their ideas. The students were able to convey their ideas clearer and with more detail. One factor, which might have contributed to this was the lack of correction from the researcher.

The students appeared to be more confident and were less shy to speak in English. Another factor may be that the activities themselves were interesting and fun, and they forgot that they were in class.

The researcher also believed that since the speaking activities were carried out soon after the new vocabulary was introduced, the students were able to retain and recall most of the words. However, the students' ability to remember these words after a longer period of time was not observed in this study.